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UNITED STATES FOREIGN TRADE

Summary of U.S. Export and Import Merchandise Trade

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SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES IN EXPORT AND IMPORT REPORTING AND COMPILING PROCEDURES BEGINNING WITH STATISTICS FOR JANUARY 1978

This special release summarizes major changes in the export and import coverage, reporting, and compiling procedures which became effective with and will be reflected in statistics released for January 1978 and subsequent months. These changes are (1) the introduction of the 1978 editions of Schedule B and Schedule E; (2) the inclusion of the SITC Revision 2 Changes in Schedule A, (3) the inclusion of nonmonetary gold in the export and import statistics; and (4) the presentation of the import statistics on a date of importation (DOI) basis rather than on a date of entry (DOE) or date of filing basis as was the case during 1977 and earlier years.

The 1978 Editions of Export Classification Schedules B and E

Beginning with statistics for January 1978, two new export classification systems are being introduced. They are Schedule B, (Statistical Classification of Domestic and Foreign Commodities Exported from the United States) and Schedule E, (SITC Based Classification of Domestic and Foreign Commodities Exported from the United States).

The new Schedule B, which is based on the framework of the Tariff Schedules of the United States (TSUS), will be the classification system used for collecting data on U.S. merchandise exports. Computer outputs which will reflect export data in terms of the new Schedule B commodity numbers are data bank tapes; and all tabular outputs, whether hard copy or microform, such as EM 522, EM 531, EM 563, etc.

The 1978 Schedule E, a completely new schedule, is based on the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) Revision 2. The classifications in Schedule B are allocated to those in Schedule E on a one for one basis. Foreign Trade tabulation EM 450/455 and publications such as FT 900, FT 990, FT 410, FT 450, and FT 455 will present data in terms of the classifications in Schedule E.

Prior to January 1978 the export statistics presented in all Bureau of the Census foreign trade reports were in terms of the classifications presented in the 1971 edition of Schedule B. The commodity numbers in that schedule were based on and in the framework of Standard International Trade Classification (SITC), Revision 1.

Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) Revision 2 Changes Reflected in Schedule A

Effective with the statistics for January 1978, Schedule A (Statistical Classification of Commodities Imported into the United States), has been revised to reflect the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) Revision 2 changes. Schedule A, like the newly developed export SITC classification system (Schedule E, noted above), is also based on the SITC and is one of the two classification systems used in compiling and publishing data on U.S. merchandise imports. Export and import data for 1977 appearing in 1978 issues of Reports FT 900, and FT 990 will be revised in so far as is practicable, to reflect the Revision 2 changes.

Nonmonetary Gold Included in the Statistics

Exports and imports of nonmonetary gold in such forms as ore, scrap and base bullion, and nonmonetary refined bullion, which were previously excluded will be included in the statistics. In earlier years imports of nonmonetary gold were published in a special announcement titled, U.S. Exports and Imports of Gold, which appeared monthly in Report FT 990. Imports of silver in these forms have been included in the statistics on a regular basis since January 1969.

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Inquiries concerning these figures should be addressed to the Chief, Foreign Trade Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. Tel: Area Code 301, 763-5140.

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Date of Importation for Imports

Beginning with statistics for January, the import compiling procedures are being modified, in so far as is practicable, to include shipments in the statistics for the month in which the merchandise actually was brought into the country, or the month of withdrawal, in the case of warehouse withdrawals for consumption. Effective January 1978, the date of importation as reported on the import entries is being used to determine the statistical month in which the shipments are included. For 1977 and previous years, the date the import documents were officially filed with Customs was used to determine the statistical month in which shipments were included.

The Bureau has recompiled the 1977 data on a date of importation, DOI, basis. Overall monthly totals for such data along with comparable previously compiled date of entry (DOE) data for 1977 are presented in the table that follows. (Note: Both the DOE and DOI monthly data shown in the table have been further modified to reflect the inclusion of nonmonetary gold—See footnote 1 on table.)

As can be derived from the figures in the table, the net increase in calendar year 1977 DOI data over DOE data (on an f.a.s. value basis) was about $205 million, with monthly differences ranging from a minus $113.8 million to a plus $1,063.8 million—See footnote 2 on table.

In recompiling the 1977 data on a DOI basis, a review was made of the import documents filed each month. This review enabled the identification of documents by date of importation. Those showing dates of importation for the prior month were sorted out for inclusion in their proper statistical month. Thus, for example, the DOI total shown for January 1977 represents data from documents filed with Customs in February 1977 with January 1977 dates of importation combined with data from documents filed in January 1977 with January 1977 dates of importation. This procedure was repeated for all months of 1977. (Note: Documents filed in January 1978 with December 1977 dates of importation were identified, sorted out, and included in the DOI total for December 1977. This segment of documents amounted to $2,171.5 million and has been processed in all major import tabular formats (IM 145X, IM 145Y, IM 136 etc.) for distribution to the regular recipients of these tabulations, and to be made available at Commerce Department Reference locations in New York and Washington. The user should also note that documents filed in January 1977 with December 1976 dates of importation were sorted out and are not included in the DOI total shown for January 1977.)

In 1978 issues of Reports which present prior years data (FT 900 and FT 990), 1977 data at the 1 digit SITC section level are recompiled on a DOI basis. Also in certain 1977 annual import tabulations and publications the data are recompiled and will be presented on a DOI basis. (E.g. FT 150, FT 155, FT 246, etc.)

U.S. General Imports of Merchandise by Month January to December 1977

(In millions of dollars. F.a.s. (free alongside ship) and C.i.f. (cost, insurance, and freight) import values. Date of importation, DOI, is the date the merchandise was actually brought into the United States. Date of entry, DOE, is the date of Customs' official acceptance of the import documents)

1977	F.a.s. value				C.i.f. value			
	Date of Importation (DOI)		Date of Entry (DOE)		Date of Importation (DOI)		Date of Entry (DOE)	
	Seasonally adjusted	Unadjusted[2]	Seasonally adjusted	Unadjusted[2]	Seasonally adjusted	Unadjusted	Seasonally adjusted	Unadjusted
January-December[1]	147,685.7	147,695.8	147,281.0	147,490.8	157,568.3	157,574.0	157,149.8	157,368.9
January	10,971.4	10,644.5	11,300.0	10,963.3	11,733.9	11,384.2	12,090.0	11,729.7
February	12,881.8	11,592.3	11,699.6	10,528.5	13,749.4	12,373.1	12,488.9	11,238.8
March	12,082.5	13,142.1	12,482.9	13,577.7	12,878.5	14,007.9	13,307.3	14,474.3
April	12,086.9	11,934.6	12,617.3	12,458.3	12,885.6	12,723.2	13,443.4	13,274.0
May	10,983.1	11,257.7	11,644.0	11,935.1	11,726.0	12,019.2	12,431.9	12,742.7
June	13,396.1	14,056.5	13,027.0	13,669.2	14,297.7	15,002.6	13,904.7	14,590.2
July	13,076.6	12,430.6	12,504.0	11,886.3	13,973.0	13,282.7	13,357.8	12,697.9
August	11,650.7	12,059.6	12,273.2	12,704.0	12,415.8	12,851.6	13,091.7	13,551.2
September	12,605.2	12,450.2	12,720.4	12,563.9	13,453.8	13,288.3	13,573.7	13,406.7
October	12,995.6	12,494.0	12,332.7	11,856.7	13,867.7	13,332.4	13,166.0	12,657.8
November	11,833.3	12,261.7	11,562.6	11,981.2	12,592.6	13,048.5	12,303.3	12,748.7
December	13,122.5	13,371.8	13,117.3	13,366.5	13,994.3	14,260.2	13,991.1	14,256.9

[1]Figures include data on U.S. imports of nonmonetary gold which totaled $674.0 million for the calendar year with monthly amounts as follows: January, $30.4 million; February, $23.3 million; March, $26.0 million; April, $23.7 million; May, $28.8 million; June, $99.6 million; July, $26.5 million; August, $42.5 million; September, $88.2 million; October, $43.1 million; November, $182.7 million; and December, $59.3 million.

[2]Differences in the 1977 overall monthly DOI and DOE totals are as follows: January, -$318.8 million; February, +$1,063.8 million; March, -$435.5 million; April, -$523.7 million; May, -$677.4 million; June, +$387.3 million; July,+$544.3 million; August, -$644.3; September, -$113.8; October, +$637.3 million; November, +$280.4 million; and December, +$5.3 million. (These differences are based on f.a.s. values.)

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